

Songs of the Northland
And Other Poems



FREDERICK C. MILLER

Miller

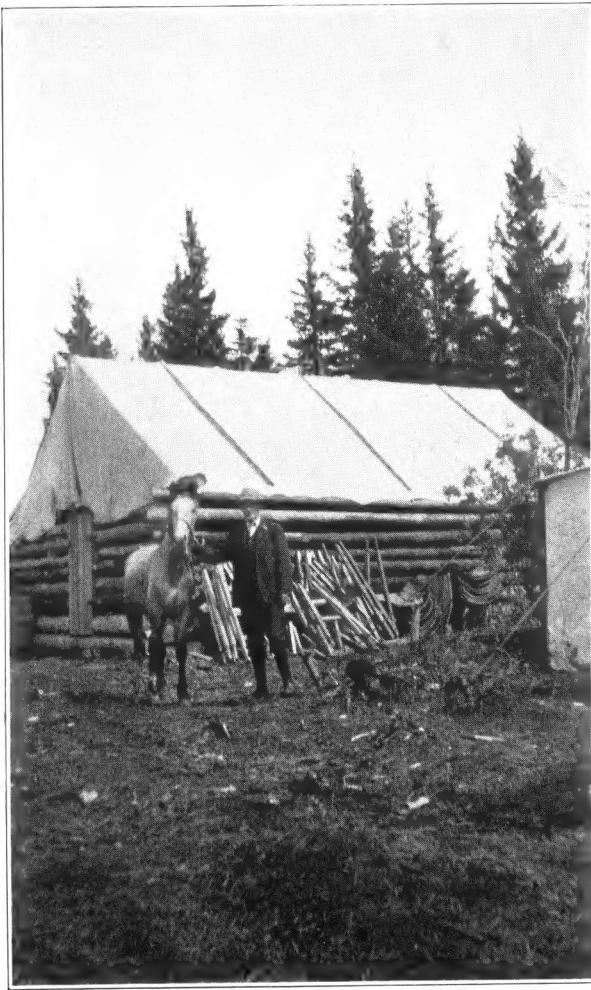
Songs of the Northland

PS
3525
I313S6

Elan "Ozahre" Harris

Ex LIBRIS
UNIVERSITATIS
ALBERTAEANIS





For a while I wandered, wandered
In the land of the spruce and the pine.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND

and Other Poems

By

Frederick Charles Miller

*Formerly of the Canadian Government Indian
Department Service*



1925
THE STRATFORD COMPANY
Publishers
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Copyright, 1925
The STRATFORD CO., Publishers
Boston, Mass.

Printed in the United States of America

UNIVERSITY
OF ALBERTA LIBRARY

CONTENTS

	PAGE
SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND	
The Call of the "Storm Song"	1
The Song of the Northland	3
The Northern Lights	8
The Lesson of the Northern Lights	10
The Great Plains in Winter	12
Western Canada	15
The Windflower	17
When the Wild Goose Wings Above	19
Sleighbells	21
A Wanderer Sat by His Campfire	24
When the Moon Shone on the Fraser	27
The Cities of the Plain	30
A Western Blizzard	36
When All Golden Stands the Wheat	40
Autumn Leaves	43
We Are as Barren Fig Trees	45

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Golden Days	47
The Seasons of Our Life	50
White Sails	55
The Days of Our Youth	58
A Summer Day	61
The White Poplar Tree	65
The Men of the Restless Feet	67
Nenana to Nome	71
SONGS OF CALIFORNIA	
The Call "Return"	75
The Cowboy	77
Toil and Its Reward	79
A Lesson of Life	80
The Campfires on the Hills	82
After the Storm	84
Asilomar	85
The City by the Bay	86
WAR POEMS	
The Retreat from Mons—August, 1914 . . .	88
Mons Recaptured	92
The Firstlings	94

CONTENTS

	PAGE
"Lafayette, We Are Here"	96
MISCELLANEOUS POEMS	
Lines in a Nurse's Album	98
O Matron Tall	100
"And Underneath Are the Everlasting Arms" .	101
Night Thoughts	102

TO MY FELLOW PIONEERS OF THE
GREAT NORTHWEST THIS BOOK OF
POEMS IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND
SONGS OF THE SEA
SONGS OF CALIFORNIA
AND ALL "A PART OF ME."

FOREWORD

"Songs of the Northland and Other Poems" are the result of the deep and heart-searching experiences of a quiet, unassuming minister of religion in Northern Santa Barbara County, California.

In Mr. Miller one would never suspect so rich a background of contacts with life in its more elemental aspects, but his poems clearly demonstrate how actively and profitably he has lived. He is a writer who has not been obliged to hunt for subjects. The episodes and observations of his career seem to have recorded themselves in verse in his mind, and he writes with sincerity and purpose. His pictures of the Canadian Northwest are not imaginary or fanciful. In them is the reality and vigor which can come only from the mind and heart of one who has known that romantic difficult land under pioneer conditions. This little book will help many to see the "Northland" and other things of significance from the viewpoint of one whose varied life has proved a treasured opportunity for poetic vision and analysis.

W. BERTRAND STEVENS,
Bishop Coadjutor of Los Angeles.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

I, Frederick Charles Miller, the writer of these poems and now General Missionary of the Episcopal Church for Northern Santa Barbara County, California, was born in Liverpool, England, and brought to Western Canada (Manitoba) as a child of two years in the pioneer days before the completion of the C. P. R.

Briefly sketched, the highlights of my many activities include: being brought up on a grain and cattle ranch, teaching country schools, farming for myself (with disastrous financial results!), driving all one summer for a Fire Insurance Company, in which I covered all of Southwestern Manitoba and Southwest Saskatchewan with horse and buggy; driving a mail and passenger stage for two winters between the towns of Birtle, and Minota, Manitoba; a summer with a Resident Engineer's party on the Grand Trunk Pacific Railroad, a three and one-half years' service with the Indian Department, with most of it spent on the White Bear Reservation, Saskatchewan, in charge of the office and distribution of supplies to the Indians; and finally about fourteen months on rail-

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

road construction work in the Canadian Rockies (west of Edmonton) working as a bookkeeper and supply keeper on the C. N. R., and later, checking freight at Mile 28, B. C. (British Columbia) on the Grand Trunk Pacific. This was my last work ere coming to California in the Fall of '13.

Now comes the question: How did I come to write anything in a poetical vein? And in reply I have to state that my ability to write, such as it is, came to me out of a clear sky—or rather more truly I am convinced, out of the above recorded "very varied experiences." In short, I feel that "I am," as brave old Ulysses said of himself, "a part of all I've been and seen." And so I feel that the following poems are the natural expression of the indelible impress made upon my mind, heart and soul by the Spirit of the Great Lone Land in which I wandered, fought, struggled, and best of all "learned" in the days of my youth.

Prologue

THE CALL OF THE "STORM SONG"

As I lie awake in the city,
 Warm in my four-post bed,
I know that the storm clouds gather,
 By the "storm song" overhead.

But it does not sing in the city,
 Nor on the prairies wide,
As it does in the narrow valleys;
 Where the Fraser's waters glide.

For I've lain in my bunk in the bunk-house,
 Wrapped in my blankets warm;
And have listened, listened, listened
 To the wind-song of the storm.

I've heard the wind full sweeping
 In the topmost tops of the pines;
And it sounds like a long lost spirit,
 As it eddies, and swoops, and whines!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Then, as it lulls for a moment,
Over its stands and its stones,
I hear the voice of the river
In its many monotones.

There is the life of the strong man,
Wild, tempestuous and free!
For to live our life untrammelled
Is to happiness the key.

So the call of the "Storm Song" singeth
Insistently to me.
Leave thou the enslaving cities,
And in freedom's life be free!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

THE SONG OF THE NORTHLAND

Prelude:

I sing the Song of the Northland,
The land of ice and snow,
Where the strong man reigns as a king,
And the weak man cannot go.

For the Spirit of the Northland watches!
It makes them strong to endure,
'Tis no place for the faint-hearted,
And the "weeding" is very sure!

None but the strong may enter.
None but the brave may stay!
For the weak ones cannot endure
The hardships day by day.

.
The traveler now in the Northland,
Who treads untrodden ways,
May find in the H. B. Records
The tale of other days.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Of men who left their homeland,
In the days now long gone by,
And entered the heart of the Northland
To live there and to die!

All praise to these sons of old Scotia!
These true-hearted, brave-hearted Celts!
Who traded their goods to the Indians
In exchange for their furs and their pelts.

They lived their lives in the Northland,
Afar from their kith and their kin,
Working for "The Company" ever,
And the furs they were bound to win.

Such were these Scottish factors,
These men of sterling worth;
And long will they be remembered
'Mong the strong ones of the earth.

All honor to the Royal Mounted!
The men who can ride a horse!
These make, though few in number,
The best known "mounted" force—

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

The best known "mounted" force
In this or other lands,
Who weave together the meshes,
And draw together the strands

Of the clues 'gainst the cattle rustler,
'Gainst the murderer fleeing their search,
Into the land of the pinewoods,
Into the land of the birch.

For their eyes are ever watchful,
These dauntless dogs of the trail!
They follow, follow after,
And never, never fail!

In singing the Song of the Northland
I forget not the Catholic Priest—
From the Rockies to the westward,
To the Great Bay on the east,

From Lesser Slave to the Arctic
He trod his humble way;
And brought to souls benighted
The light of a brighter day—

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Nor of his fellow-workers,
The men of the English Church;
Who gave their lives for the Indians
In the land of the flaunting birch!

All these had left their homeland,
And then boldly followed the trail.
They bore their burdens bravely
For they knew that they would prevail.

And, on the Day of Judgment
They'll stand for judgment true;
And their Maker will give them credit,
To every man his due.

.
This is my Song of the Northland!
Of a day that is now long past,
For into its sunny places
There enters an army vast—

There enters an army vast—
Of people of every tongue,
Of those who have left their homeland
To dwell the rivers and lakes among!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

And these, far up in the Northland,
Will turn the prairie sod,
And this they will make their homeland
And there will they worship God.

"So the old order changeth, yielding place to
the new."—*Tennyson*.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

THE NORTHERN LIGHTS

The night is clear and cloudless,
All serene the earth below,
When in the North there flareth forth,
A wonderful white glow!

Of glorious, glorious streamers,
Waving their flags of white,
Wonderful, grand, triumphant;
O'er the starlit dome of the night!

Slowly, slowly at first,
Gently, gently creeping,
Up, up the sky, high, high, high,
Then suddenly forth-leaping—

In bewildering flames of glory,
Oh a sight beyond compare,
They sink and flash, they dart and dash,
In the still, calm, winter air!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

And sometimes on a summer's eve,
 This glorious sight is seen,
As they glide and glance, they dart and dance,
 The earth and sky between!

Methinks this was Jacob's ladder
 The bright path the angels trod
From the dark'ning night to Eternal light
 Straight up to the throne of God!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

THE LESSON OF THE NORTHERN
LIGHTS

So as we gaze enraptured
At this wondrous light in the sky
A faith springs up within us
That we shall never die.

A faith in God's great mercy,
In His kindness unto men;
For it is these sights, in the still, calm nights,
That will make us think, and then

A vision comes triumphant,
Of a glory greater than all,
Of our future home, where we'll ne'er roam;
And at last we shall hear the call—

The call to leave this earth place,
To answer the loving call,
For One above, whose name is Love;
And there shall we know all!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Yes! there shall we know all,
When His glory shall be revealed;
Which passeth men's understanding,
And all our wounds shall be healed!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

THE GREAT PLAINS IN WINTER

Far flung, wide and fenceless,
In a day now long gone by,
The great plains of the Westland
Stretched out—till tired the eye—

Till tires the eye of gazing
Into the distance far,
With naught in sight, by day or night,
To make it or to mar!

Stretched out in spotless glory,
Under a winter sun,
Or lying pale in the moonlight
When the Autumn days were done.

When the Autumn days were done;
And the snow covered deep its breast,
Dead white to the far horizon
Stretched the Great Plains of the West.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Oh the magic! Oh the glory!
Of that land covered deep with snow;
And the sparkle of the crystals
'Neath the moon's effulgent glow!

A sight of magic splendor,
Throughout the long, long night,
Stretching to the far horizon,
A sheet of brilliant white.

Then a sheet of livid white,
'Neath the moonbeams wan, and cold,
In the nights of late December,
When the year is very old.

But when again at daybreak,
The sun's uprising beams
Transport anew the plain, renewing life again—
A very paradise it seems!

For throughout the long, long winter,
Each morn the sun shines bright,
And his radiance is undimmed
Till fades the dying light.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Such then is the peerless glory
 Of the far flung, fenceless plain
When in the sky the sun rides high,
 And the moon doth wax and wane.

Once seen 'tis never forgotten;
 That land covered deep with snow;
And we carry the memory with us
 Wherever we may go.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

WESTERN CANADA

WHEAT IS KING

Here's to the prairie, sweeping and level!
The joy of the Lord—the scourge of the Devil!
Here men who are broken—lost in the race,
May worship their God—look man in the face,
And as the seasons come swiftly around,
May garner the crops that rise from the ground.

MIXED FARMING

Land of gentle rise and hollow,
Little slough and buffalo wallow,
Of willow bush and poplar glade
Wherein the cattle shall find shade;
Thou art my choice of all the land,
And on thy breast shall tall crops stand.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

RANCHING

Here's to the land of hill and vale,
Upon whose breast there blows no gale;
And from whose gentle slopes the cattle,
Gaze down upon the Bow and Battle;
And in the Fall and Autumn days,
They stand surrounded by the haze.

BUSH COUNTRY

Oh land of muskeg, swamp and pine,
Thank goodness that thou art not mine!
I'd rather on the prairie's broad expanse
Do all my work and take my chance;
And in my granary large and airy,
Have all the products of the prairie.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

THE WINDFLOWER

(*Flower emblem of Manitoba*)

What do we watch and wait for
 So early in the spring?
We like to see the birds come,
 We like to hear them sing;
But that which we watch and wait for
 Is a far more lovely thing.

Yes, it is the earliest spring-flower
 That in the wind will nod!
A thing of matchless beauty,
 For it is sent from God.
For it is sent from God,
 And our hearts do truly know

For then at last—the winter past—
 Will wild flowers gently blow.
Then when the sun of the springtime
 Drives swift away the snow;
We old ones and we young ones
 Will go where winds do blow.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Will go where winds do blow,
For young and old do know
That on the open spaces,
Will the windflower quickly grow.

Will grow as if by magic!
Will come up over night;
And where was snow, will swiftly glow—
The windflower ever bright.

Yes, first comes the gentle windflower.
Some poets call it crocus, and some anemone,
But the windflower, the windflower,
It always is to me.

It comes so very early,
Stands bravely in the cold!
No wonder that we prize it
Above its weight in gold.

A type it is of our people
In this far, Western Land!
The emblem of our Province,
Forever will it stand!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

WHEN THE WILD GOOSE WINGS
ABOVE

After the snow and the blizzard,
After the wind and the rain;
We hear the call of the wild geese,
As they pass o'er us again.

Winging their way to the Northland,
In the early days of the Spring,
Before there come the small birds
Who do so blithely sing!

Yes, as swims the land in water,
. And fast flees away the snow;
We hear the honk, honk, honk of the wild geese,
And then do we surely know

That the long, long Winter's ended,
That the Spring has come at last;
And it brings us faith and courage,
For the dread, dread cold is past.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Yes, as shines the sun in its glory,
And cloudless is the sky;
Away in the void to the Southward,
We hear the wild geese cry!

They cry and call to each other,
As they sail in phalanx grand,
With a leader, always a leader,
And his mates on either hand.

On either hand, but rearward,
With their heads stretched close to his tail;
And then again another pair,
And another pair do sail;

So to the last of the line,
Stretched out in the form of a V;
And we watch them, watch them, watch them
As far as the eye can see!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

SLEIGHBELLS

I stood at my door bare-headed
At my door on a matchless night.
The heavens with stars were flooded;
All silvery the moonbeams' light.

It was a night in Winter,
A few short years ago;
As I stood and breathed the air, as a tonic oh most rare,
And watched the moonbeams flow—

Yes, watched them gently flow,
As they spread over earth and snow,
Driving dark away and making light as day
All things upon the earth below.

'Twas a night of magic splendor;
A night without compare!
And as a life-giving tonic,
I breathed the warm, wet air!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

And then as I stood enchanted,
At all the beauty and light,
A sound of the sweetest music
Smote suddenly upon the night.

Yes! 'twas the sweetest music that I had ever heard,
As upon the quivering air of the night,
It rose and fell, with lapse and swell,
Till it left me breathless with delight.

For never had I heard such music,
In concert hall, or church,
As I heard that moonlit evening,
In the land of the silvery birch.

Sometimes it sounded nearer,
Sometimes it sounded far;
And sometimes clinging there in the rarefied air,
Like the music of a star.

But gradually diminishing,
Further, further and further away
Until at last—in silence vast—
It died 'mid the woodlands far away!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

But still as I strained to listen,
Methought I heard a chime—
An echo of the sweetest music
Floating adown the corridors of Time!

Then I turned away reluctant
Opened the closèd door;
And went to my bed enraptured, for never such music
Had I ever heard before!

So the memory of that night of splendor
And that music afloat on the air,
Will remain with me forever,
'Til I climb the Heavenly stair.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

A WANDERER SAT BY HIS
CAMPFIRE

A wanderer sat by his campfire,
Slow-turning his bannock-bread.
He was stony-eyed and thoughtful,
And this is what he said:

"I've left my home in the old land,
I've roamed both free and far;
And Oh! I've run 'neath the blinding sun,
And camped beneath a star!

I've lived with strange, strange people
I've sailed 'neath the Southern Cross.
I have lived and I lusted, I have won and been busted;
But have never felt the loss—

Have never felt the loss of those who knew and loved
me
In a day now long gone by—
In the dear old, dear old homeland
'Neath an English summer sky!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Till tonight I sit a-weary,
Slow—counting my gold in my chest,
And have come to the conclusion
That to stay at home is best.

For what do we gain, but strife and pain
When we wander the wide world o'er,
By night nor day we cannot stay,
But turn from every door.

We turn from every door,
Though opened wide to us,
And then we know, for weal or woe,
That the road is not for us.

No! to live at home is best,
Among our kith and our kin;
Then we're more sure to keep us pure
And shield our soul from sin.

So now and then, I shall take my pen
And write a line to you;
And so I ought if I've a thought
Of those beyond the blue—

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Of those beyond the blue, blue ocean—
 Of those I left 'lang syne'—
For my joys are their joys
 And all their joys are mine.

Yes, I'll write to you a letter,
 To my mother kind and true;
And as the embers burn, I'll promise to return
 To my old homeland and you."

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

WHEN THE MOON SHONE ON THE
FRASER

When shone the moon on the Fraser
In a starlit night serene;
I stood on the floor of the Valley—
The high, high hills between.

I came from my bunk in the bunkhouse,
To breathe the tonic air;
And then I quaffed a life-giving draught,
Ere I should to my bunk repair.

Though flooded with light was the valley,
The moon could not yet be seen;
For the barrier of the great hills
Stood the moon and me between.

But knowing the wait would not be late,
I breathed the fragrant air;
For the scent of the pine is a scent divine,
'Twas a tonic, oh most rare!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

And ever and anon my gaze
Drifted towards the barrier high,
And I waited to see the moon, which now would
come so soon,
For its light was in the sky.

Oh, then! at last, my waiting past,
A wondrous light there grew;
As the edge of the moon, like a great balloon
Rose slowly into view.

Yes! rose slowly into view—
Now a quarter—then a half,
And all too soon the full, full moon
White as a woman's scarf!

Yes, white as a woman's scarf,
And bright as her jewels rare;
Her beams did glance, did dart and dance
In the wonderful still air!

Then high, high, high, from the dome of the sky
It shed o'er the valley a sheen;
A sheen of magic glory, oft told in song and story,
But a glory seldom elsewhere seen.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

No! not of such matchless glory,
As I saw that wondrous night,
In the valley of the Fraser,
Enrapturing my sight

Is the rising of the moon
O'er the prairies' broad expanse,
Tho' all white doth lie the snow and upon the earth
below
The moonbeams in glory dance!

So if I live to be aged—past three score years and ten
Never shall I see such another sight
As the moon arising slowly, as the moon arising holy
O'er that towering snow-clad height!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

THE CITIES OF THE PLAIN

(An Old Timer to a Newcomer)

Far famed in song and story,
Winnipeg, gateway of the West,
Of all the cities of the Plain
Stands peerless 'mongst the rest!

For through her widening portals
There rolls an endless tide,
Of people of every nation
To live here and abide—

To live here and abide,
They come from many lands;
Some are from our old homeland,
And some from foreign strands.

Many pass on to the prairies,
And live the home life there;
While many remain in the city
In its wealth and fame to share.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

And as this tide rolls westward,
There it meets another tide,
Ever rolling, rolling eastward
Of golden grain—the Country's pride!

These tides they meet in the City,
These tides of men and grain;
Together they build the City,
And bring to it much gain.

And so the city prosperous,
Lies at the edge of the plain
While she sends her men to the westward,
And to the east, her grain.

So growtheth this noble city,
Though still so young in years;
It is built by men who are happy,
And not by those in tears!

I take you now to Alberta,
To Edmonton, Queen of the North,
From whose wide and spacious streets
Endless a stream flows forth,—

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Of the hunter and the trapper,
 Of those who never fail;
Of those who search for gold,
 Of those who follow the trail.

Of those who follow the trail
 Afar to the North and the West;
Chasing ever the rainbow,
 Following ever the quest—

The quest for the El Dorado,
 The quest for adventure high;
And some return to tell it,
 And some remain to die.

So broodeth this noble city,
 Welcoming all who come;
Now shouting aloud her triumph,
 Now lying in anguish dumb.

Lying in anguish dumb,
 As she holds her dead to her breast;
Shouting aloud in her triumph,
 As she praises ever her best.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Yes, in right true Western fashion,
She praises ever her best;
The heralds of our Empire,
A frontier of the West.

I take you now to the Southward,
To Calgary on the C. P. R.
Where stretch the wide, wide prairies,
And the Rockies gleam afar.

The Rockies gleam afar,
White shines the snow on their crest;
A type of our new-born country,
And the people of the West.

But when the sun long scorches,
And there falls no gentle rain,
Swiftly then fade the flowers,
And swift dies the golden grain.

Then to the hills and the hollows,
While the pools of water last,
There trampeth a mighty army—
An army large and vast

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Of horses and of cattle,
 Of calves and wide-horned steers,
Which bring to their owners "plenty"
 In the "leanest" of the years.

Just as a flower on the grassland
 Expands in the morning's glow,
So builds this new-born city,
 And the building is not slow.

Again we return to the eastward,
 Returning this time by the rail,
And just in the hush of the evening
 As groweth the twilight pale,

We look from our train as it glideth,
 From the prairie into a town;
And we find ourselves in Regina—
 In Regina of far-flung renown!

For in this prairie city
 Are men of the R. M. P.
Who scoured this land in the days gone by;
 And awed the Sioux and the Cree!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

They kept the land in safety;
And still they keep it safe,
For their vigils are ever tireless,
And they watch o'er the poor and the waif.

And as we gaze from the city,
O'er the wide and spreading plain;
We see to the far horizon,
The fields of golden grain—

The fields of golden grain!
The heads of the tossing wheat!
Which grows there in its glory,
That all may have to eat—

That all may have to eat,
Always enough and to spare;
To feed their own home people,
And the stranger sojourning there.

And well is she named, for she lieth—
The mountains and lakes between,
As flower of God! in the prairie sod!
Regina! Glorious Queen!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

A WESTERN BLIZZARD

The sun shines clear and cloudless,
Upon the western plain;
And there's naught to warn the traveler
Of possible death or pain.

But suddenly the storm-cloud,
Quick gathering in its might,
Flings down so thick the snowflakes
That it is dark as night—

Yes, dark as night and gone the sight
Of the sun meridian high;
And before the lash of the storm fiend
All living things must fly!

Must fly to find a refuge,
Must fly with their backs to the storm,
And then the traveler, breathless,
Thinks of days that were warm—

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Of days that were warm and cloudless
While the sun was shining bright,
But now it is dark and stormy,
And the sun is lost to sight.

And the wild and bitter westwind,
Sweeping in fury strong,
Blinds the eyes of the traveler
As it hurls the snow along!

Such is the change, so quick and strange,
When the Storm-God comes to reign;
And he holds the land with an iron hand
Till cometh the sun again.

Till cometh the sun again,
And the world is born anew!
Then shall men take courage,
And will their strength renew.

Such is the western Blizzard—
It comes without a sign—
And all must fight it bravely
And never, never whine,

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

For he who loses courage
Out on the open plain,
When the sudden storm comes down
May never reach home again!

And each and every winter
The storm-fiend finds his prey—
For when at last its anger's past
Many are far away!

A poor belated rancher
Is found lying dead in his track!
Or some storm-bound homesteader
Lies stiff in his bunk in a shack!

And sometimes little children,
Returning home from school
Sink down by the road exhausted—
For the wind is biting cool!

So God keep us from wandering
Away from the lonely track,
And if we are lost—at whatever cost—
May He guide us safely back.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

May He guide us safely back!
Again to our waiting friends;
Then we will raise a hymn of praise,
As the storm in silence ends!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

WHEN ALL GOLDEN STANDS THE
WHEAT

O what a sight, what a glorious sight!
Is a field of wheat in the Fall;
When the sun is warm and hazy and the breeze is
slow and lazy,
And the sun doth cast o'er all,

Doth cast o'er all, through a warm dull pall,
A soft strong heat;
Which remaineth long and, being so strong,
Doth ripen to gold the wheat.

Yes, this is the time when the farmer
Shall, after watching for days,
See his fields of wheat 'neath the sunbeams' heat,
Turn yellow in the golden haze.

This cometh not of a sudden,
But gradually, gradually the heat,
When the head hath filled and our God hath willed,
That 'tis for the harvest meet,

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Will turn from green to yellow, and make most mellow, mellow
The kernel of the wheat;
So that at last—long waiting past,
The time shall come to greet

The hum, hum, hum of the binder,
That now shall be heard in the land,
From early dawn till day hath worn
The light to a single strand.

Yes, a single strand of sunshine,
As the sun away doth creep,
To another land—perchance more grand—
But where faith is not so deep.

No 'tis not so deep, but is held more cheap,
For there man digs from the earth,
The silver and gold of ages old.
And doth not wait for the birth

Of a plant from the seed, all unchecked by a weed,
Which groweth the Summer through;
Then in the Fall, days best of all,
Ripens to a harvest true.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Yes! there's naught on this earth, the place of our
birth,
Can compare with a field of wheat;
All golden hued, for it is endued
With the joy of a promise fulfilled.

.

So we feast our eyes on its glory,
Then bring our binders forth;
And there we shall toil on the fruitful soil,
In the wheat fields of the North.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

AUTUMN LEAVES

The Painter who painted the flowers,
 He painted too the leaves,
And so doth show in the afterglow
 A picture—to him who believes.

Yes, to him who believes in beauty,
 As shown in the colored leaf,
In the changèd scene from the constant green,
 And the glorious gold of the sheaf,

Is shown a picture of leaves, leaves, naught but leaves,
 Vari-colored all.
Then brown and gold he doth behold
 'Neath the mellowed light of the Fall.

Yes, brown and gold, and gold and brown
 In myriad shades and tints,
The picture shows and brightly glows,
 And He naught of beauty stints.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

No, He withholdeth not the beauty,
 But lavishly he lays
The Autumn tints and never stints
 Along the broad highways.

And too, along the byways,
 The paths that twist and turn
In capricious mood throughout the wood,
 The riotous colors burn!

The many colored maples,
 Orange, red and gold,
The poplars, too, in varied hue
 And others we behold.

Whilst among the shrubs and bushes,
 A sea of color glows,
From palest yellow to reddest red
 In varying tints, it shows.

And so the Painter's picture,
 Forth-spread before our eyes,
Brings to one and all in the golden days of Fall,
 A never ending scene of beauty and surprise.

· SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

WE ARE AS BARREN FIG TREES

(From a Translation from the French)

Leaves, leaves in abundance,
Hang on the flaunting tree;
But there is no sight in the golden light
Of fruit as there ought to be.

And 'tis so, so often with us—
We make a brave, brave show,
But our lives are really barren
For no fruit on our tree doth grow.

And so at last our labors past,
We shall have this bitter thought:
“ ‘Tis without avail, for we shall fail
To show some fruit as we ought!”

Yes, our lives have been unfruitful,
We've made noise with many a word;
So as we cross the River with beings all a-quiver
I'm afraid 'twill not be heard—

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

No, 'twill not be heard, that glad, glad word:—
 "Ye have borne fruit; and ye have done your best,
Well done ye good and faithful,
 Now enter into rest!"

For we are as barren fig trees—
 From topmost branch to root,
Leaves, leaves in great abundance,
 But there our Lord shall see no fruit!

Everywhere the thought of self, the thought of pride
 Have buried our lives beneath
A growth of weed, a growth of greed
 Which shall unto us bequeath

Not joy, but sorrow unending,
 For in place of the wheat in the sheaf
Shall our Lord behold, when we are old
 Weeds, weeds beyond belief.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

GOLDEN DAYS

When reaped has been the harvest,
O'er the western plain so vast;
There comes a glorious period
That for many weeks shall last.

When the earth prepares for her winter sleep,
When all is garnered in,
When stacked is the grain o'er the spreading plain,
Then the drowsy days begin.

For it seems that the earth exhausted,
After production vast,
Rests in peace and quiet after the rush and riot
Of summer-time now past.

It is a time of beauty,
A time to rest the eye;
And bring to the tired brain, quiet and peace again,
As all things quietly die.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

The vivid green of summer, it all hath passed away;
A change has crept o'er all the land,
And in its place, with wondrous grace,
The browns and gold, our tributes do demand!

Yes, stretched to the far horizon,
As far as the eye can see,
Are the stubble fields, whose bounteous yields
Will enrich both you and me.

The stubble stands so short and brown,
Beneath the sunbeams slow and warm; ,
And here and there and everywhere,
Are sheaves safe-stacked from the storm.

Yes, safe stacked from the storm,
In an embrace strong and warm,
Of their mother stack, who doth not lack,
For beauty in her form;

For sometimes in rows,
Yes, sometimes in pairs,
Sometimes in fours, they open their doors
To the vagrant Fall airs;

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Which passing them about and among,
Seems truly to tell
When the thresher shall come, and we hear its hum,
That all shall be well.

Yes, all shall be well as the glad harvest bell,
The engines' clear call upon the air of the Fall
Shall toll with delight, far into the night!
Bringing great riches and joy to us all!

Yes! riches and joy to us all,
For after the rush and the rain, and after the stress
and the pain,
Our granaries are filled with grain to be milled,
And content and plenty do reign.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

THE SEASONS OF OUR LIFE

Our Youth is like unto Springtime;
 Our Manhood like Summer doth show;
Middle-age, like the Fall with crops ripe and tall,
 And Old-age like Winter with its ice and its snow.

When comes the glorious Springtime,
 And all things spring from the earth,
This, this is typical
 Of the Springtime of our birth;

For as skies are clear and cloudless,
 And of an azure blue,
So in our childhood's days 'neath sunbeams brightest
 rays,
Our skies are clear and cloudless too;

And, as the storms of Spring—
 Cold winds and sudden rain,
This, this is typical
 Of childhood's storms and pain;

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

For tho' the storms come suddenly,
As suddenly do they fly,
And where was rain, and where was pain,
All, all is smiling sky!

Yes, this is typical, typical,
Of childhood's passions high;
For suddenly tho' they came,
As suddenly do they die!

All, all is hope and brightness,
In the glad, glad days of our youth,
For we're alive and we do strive,
And hunger after Truth.

And then as approacheth Summer,
With scorching heat—torrential rain,
This, this is typical,
As to manhood we attain.

Yes, the thunder clouds fast driven,
And then by lightning riven
Are typical, typical
Of our manhood once again.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

For our hearts wax hot and lustful—
We are no longer trustful,
And the clear faith of our childhood,
Is now upon the wane.

But in this stormy period,
Tho' running much to weed,
We guard and we do cherish
The plants of goodly seed—

Yes, the seeds of the faith of our childhood,
Were deep planted in our heart,
So in our joy and pain, in sunshine and in rain,
We shall never from our God depart!

And then as cometh the harvest,
And the golden days of the Fall,
This, this is typical,
Of our days when we shall hear the call—

The Call of the gracious Father,
Who bids us all to take our rest,
For after many sorrows, and many glad tomorrows,
We'll find that truly we've been blest.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Yes, after the storm and rain, appears the ripened
grain,
Our hearts beat slow but strong,
And we find the bitter rain and the bitterer, bitterer
pain,
Have driven out the wrong.

So as the sun of our life—in happiness—not strife,
Goes down the Westering slope,
We find at last a harvest vast
And our hearts are filled with hope!

And lastly we come to the Winter,
That Season of ice and snow,
This, this is typical,
As our hair to white doth grow.

For as the Indians speak of their agèd,
Of these on the verge of the grave,
They say they are "tapisco coona,"
Whom the Lord shall soon come to save!

These Indian words have this meaning:—
"Tapisco coona," "like unto snow,"
And this is typical, typical
Of us all as we downward go.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Yes, down into the narrow valley,
The deep, deep valley of Death,
And there shall we lie for awhile with folded hands
and a smile,
Till to us the Lord shall again give breath;

And then shall we rise triumphant,
A glorious, glorious throng,
And there in the Light, we will find that Right,
Has conquered all sin and Wrong!

So the Seasons changing,
From Spring to Winter's snow,
Are typical, typical, typical
Of our life on the earth below.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

WHITE SAILS

Sails, sails, white sails,
Like birds a-skim on the lake,
Draw my wandering gaze, as with amaze,
I note the path they take.

Out of the void they come,
And into the void they go;
As spirits astray on an untrod way,
They pass, ghost-like and slow.

Whither bound, whither bound,
Oh child of the Lake?
With your white, white sail 'neath the moonlight pale,
As your silent way ye take.

Methinks you were born in the early morn,
When the sun arose
In glory and light—outcasting the night,
And the sky in splendor glows!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

And sailing out as an intrepid scout,
Ye've braved the fathomless deep;
And will sail, and sail till the twilight pale,
Calls all to a gentle sleep.

Sails, sails, white sails,
What power carries ye on?
For no smoke is seen your masts between:—
You appear and then you are gone!

No paddle churns nor rudely spurns
The waters beneath your keel;
But a breath of wind follows close behind,
And its gentle power ye feel;

So hour by hour its gentle power,
Pressed forward on the Lake;
Ye make your way throughout the day,
With silver in your wake!

Ceasing, never ceasing,
In your onward way;
You travel far 'neath the evening star,
To your harbor far away.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Yea, as the bird to its nest,
And the arrow to its mark;
So to its distant harbor,
Sails the undaunted bark!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

THE DAYS OF OUR YOUTH

My theme's not new—in fact 'tis old—
“The days of our youth were the days of
glory!”
And many a time it has been told
In rhyme, in song and story.

But tho' so old 'tis ever new,
For as the years roll round,
To more than to the chosen few
The joys of Youth do still abound.

And 'tis the same in this Westland—
This land that we call home—
For our hopes were high and clear our eye
When as boys we used to roam.—

We used to roam unhindered
In the warm bright summertime,
And so it will be remembered
For ever and all time.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

And then the joy of Winter:
Running lightly o'er the snow,
Or on our swift toboggans
Headlong, we'd downward go!

Yes, we made for ourselves toboggans,
(Really nothing more than sleds)
And then, lying flat upon them, down, down
we went.
Endangering our limbs and our heads.

But little did we reck of danger
In that heyday of our youth,
To every doubt a stranger,
And happy in all truth!

And in the glorious evenings,
Full-lighted by the moon,
We ran together light-hearted
And bedtime came too soon!

Oh yes, the joy of running
Light-footed upon the drift
Till it broke away beneath us,
And we gave each other "a lift."

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Then we were always trying
To find some new, new thing—
Some made attempts at flying,
And some in setting a string—

A string to catch a wolf by!
Yet this myself I have done,
And hastened quick in the mornings
Before the uprising sun.—

Hopeful, ever hopeful
To see that wild thing stand
Hopeless, broken, and cowering,
Held by a single strand!

For Youth is ever hopeful,
(Happier too I wist)
Chasing ever the rainbow
And finding at last—the mist!

So give me the joys of boyhood—
The untrammelled days of joy—
For my days were far, far happier
The days when I was a boy!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

A SUMMER DAY

PRELUDE

When the strong, strong sun of Summer
Casts its rays upon the land,
Then all things grow and we do know
That our Life is full and grand.

Yes, full and grand throughout the land
Is the life of man;
As crops mature, we shall endure,
And live another span!

For the wondrous growth of all things green,
Gives us courage and hope,
Our sorrows fly—our hopes rise high,
And we can with all things cope.

* * * *

In this far western land, the summer days are grand,
The sunshine lingers long,

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

The morning light comes early—through eastern
gates rose pearly—
And we listen to the song

Of the birds in the trees—unruffled by the breeze—
For lying in quiet and calm,
In peace and joy without alloy,
We rest without alarm.

Then suddenly a sunbeam
Strikes athwart our window pane;
The trees are astir, and we're aware
That the day has come again.

So swiftly we leap from our bed,
To see that glorious light,
When the summer sun in his race begun—
Drives fast away the night.

The Eastern sky rose-tinted,
By the sun's uprisen beams,
Soon turns to gold, and there's unrolled
A sight surpassing dreams!

For, rolling in glorious splendor
On the east horizon far,

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

There rises slow, in glorious glow,
The Sun-god famed afar!

Yes! famed afar as all great things are,
He rises in glory grand;
Throughout the day he holds his sway,
And dominates the land.

He dominates the land in peerless glory grand;
And boldly unto him,
As shadows creep and we sink to sleep,
We raise our evening hymn.

For he is the God of the Summer,
Sent forth by One above,
His Rays are strong and, lingering long,
They prove to us His love.

Now comes the gentle eventide
Then slowly away doth sink—
A great red ball enshrouded by all
In a haze of light upon the brink—

Upon the brink just poised to sink,
Away from our wondering gaze,

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Away from sight into the night,
As it hath done many days.

Yes! through the long, long hours, as ruled tho' by
higher powers,
Unchecked, he's cast his heat
Upon the earth and raised from birth
The barley and the wheat.

And the breeze, first stirred at the song of the bird
Has grown full-lifed and strong,
And throughout the day hath held its sway
And borne the clouds along.

Yes! borne the clouds along with an arm resistless,
strong;
And when they tried the sun to hide,
He swept them far away—held undisputed sway—
And so the sunbeam's rays, unchecked throughout
the days

Beat strong upon the earth (the warm, moist Mother
earth!)
At eve do they die;
And in their wake a wondrous lake
Of saffron colored sky!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

THE WHITE POPLAR TREE

Some people love the maple,
Some people praise the pine,
But of a choice of all the trees,
The white poplar tree is mine.

As the windflower is among the flowers
A type of this Western land,
So among the trees of the prairie
Does the white, white poplar stand.

And why is this tree so dear to me?
You'll ask, and I'll reply:
" 'Twas the first tree of my boyhood
And so it will be when I die."

For it is a thing of beauty,
It groweth up so straight;
And in cleanliness and smoothness,
It hath not got a mate.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

The trees of the white, white poplar
Grew close to my prairie home;
And I never cease to look for them
Wherever I may roam.

Yes, the poplars of the prairie
Have called me back to them;
So in foreign lands I linger not,
Nor in the tents of Shem.

And I've come, a world-worn wanderer,
With my head upon my breast,
Back to my first love—the poplar—
And there shall I find sweet rest.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

THE MEN OF THE RESTLESS FEET

I'll sing a song of the wanderers,
 Of the men who cannot abide
With their kith and their kin but are restless—
 As restless as the tide.

Many come into our Northland
 And we see them but for a day,
For the spirit of Adventure calls them,
 And they cannot, cannot stay.

From the land of the howling sandstorm!
 From the land of the gentle breeze—
They come to us, these wanderers,
 These men of the Seven Seas.

The men of the Seven Seas!
 Who hold their lives as naught;
Who look on dangers as playthings,
 And upon their death as sport.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

These wanderers travel ever,
From the frozen seas of the North
To the Southern Seas where the gentle breeze
Calleth the white clouds forth.

These men have seen the Aurora
Flame in the Northern sky—
A wonderful sight on a cold, cold night
As it flings its streamers high!

They have wintered up in Greenland,
Have sailed around "The Horn."
And flashed by old Gibraltar
When the day was newly born.

When the day was newly born,
And the streamers flared upright;
The streamers of the Sun-God
As he bids the East "goodnight."

He bids the East "goodnight!"
And raceth towards the West;
Gilding the seas as he cometh,
Leaping from crest to crest.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

From crest to crest he flameth,
 Making a splendor strong;
A splendor their memory retaineth
 Though the years of their life be long.

They have seen the storm in its fury
 Rush down on the ships—its prey;
And after its wrath the sun shines forth,
 But many are far away.

Many are far away—gone to another strand,
 Where burneth a golden light;
And where at last, long wanderings past,
 Their faith is lost in sight.

These men have watched and they have seen
 A hundred strange, grand sights,
As they travelled the wide world o'er,
 In the burning days—the brilliant nights.

The brilliant nights—the burning days
 Rob them of thoughts of sleep;
And thoughts of these sights, in the dark, dark nights
 Sink into their natures deep.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Sink into their natures deep—
And none should them deride,
For it strengthens their powers of reverence
And softens their sense of pride.

It softens their sense of pride,
And humbles their thoughts of might;
So shall they stand—a glorious band—
When called to God's great sight.

L' ENVOI

So this is my song—perchance too long!—
A song of the strong and the fleet.
And I've sung to you just what is true
Of the men of the "Restless Feet."

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

NENANA TO NOME

From Nome in the far frozen Arctic
 Came a call of wild direst need:
Send us your anti-toxin,
 And speed, speed, speed.

For our men and women are dying,
 We are losing our children too,
So the radio carried the message
 The ice-laden atmosphere through.

Then up from the seaport of Anchorage
 To Nenana came the supply
Of life-saving, life-giving toxin
 That those that were sick might not die.

Then gathered the mightiest drivers
 The fleetest of foot in the North
To carry the life-saving toxin
 And silently, grimly went forth.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

To battle the leagues of the tundra,
To conquer the leagues of the plain;
To run such a race of devotion
As ne'er shall be run again.

And while all America waited,
With awe and fear-bated breath,
There was run in the far frozen Northland
A race 'tween Life and 'tween Death.

For Shannon and brave Johnny Somers,
The Irish and Englishman too,—
With their huskies fast leaping the snowdrifts
Through the snowdrifts and timberlands flew.

From Tolavana to far famèd hot springs
John Kelland stout-hearted did drive
And the air with myriad ice specks
Was a-swish, a-swish and alive.

Alive with the cold of the Northland
The cold that seeks marrow and bone,
But the true-hearted Kelland came through
Too stout-hearted even to groan.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

As he handled the handles to Folger
Who in turn gave place to J. Nicholai
And Green it was who came into Ruby
And to Sappala gave the precious supply:

To Sappala, the best of dog drivers,
The winner of many a race,
But none so hard fought as this one
And none at such terrible pace.

Hammond, Olson to Kasson
The race went relentlessly on;
And the latter came in with the toxin
And the race 'gainst death had been won!

The race with death had been won
As ne'er had a race been before;
And saved were the lives of the people,
Saved, yes by the ultimate law—

The ultimate law of devotion,
The law that runs all through Life:—
The law of the greatest of Masters—
The law of a life for a life!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Not the life taken in vengeance,
Not the life taken in rage,
But the life given freely for others:
The ultimate law of the age.

So let us remember these heroes
And the dogs that ran that great race.
For we know that at last in Valhalla
They will find each one his own place.

• • • • • • • •
L' ENVOI

So as the years go on in the future,
And men talk of hearth and of home,
The tale will be told of those heroes so bold
Who brought anti-toxin to Nome.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

SONGS OF CALIFORNIA

THE CALL "RETURN"

A voice from out the Northland,
Calling "O, come thou back to me;
O, come thou back, thou wanderer,
Thou dweller by the Southern Sea!"

The message brings a sadness,
A longing beyond control;
To hie me far to the Northward,
'Neath the shadow of the pole.

I spent my best years on the prairie,
There I lived and loved and fought;
But now is my strength gone from me,
And I am reduced to naught.

So I hear but cannot answer,
That call which comes to me,
But must heed the Great All Father
Who saith, "Remain thou by the sea."

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Still I listen, listen, eagerly,
To that voice which calls to me;
A broken weary wanderer,
A derelict of life's sea.

So not 'neath the sod of the Northland,
Shall I find at last my home;
But shall pass to the life Eternal,
Within sound of the restless foam.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

THE COWBOY

From the badlands of Montana,
Right down to the Rio Grande;
I've lived my life as a cowboy;
And none can understand—

And none can understand,
Save those who rode with me,
How full a cowboy's life is—
How full of joy and free!

Sometimes I've seen the cities,
Gone to town to see the sights.
But quickly I've tired of them,
Then back to the star strewn nights.

Back to the nights of the moonlight,
To the campfires on the plain;
Back to mother nature,
To be healed—made whole again.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

So the cities cannot hold me,
In town the life is bare;
'Tis only on the far flung prairies,
Am I happy—free from care.

The tang of the morning air,
The health of the night's repose;
Are all I want or ask for,
Till draws my life to its close.

No! I began my life as a cowboy,
And as a cowboy shall I die;
For 'tis man's way of living,
Night and day 'neath the open sky!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

TOIL AND ITS REWARD

In the soothing, slumbrous Southland,
 'Tis always afternoon;
But I long for the snow-clad prairies,
 And the light of the Northern moon.

The Spaniards say "Mañana"
 "Tomorrow we will work."
But there's that in the tang of the Northland
 That bids us never shirk.

But bear our burdens bravely,
 Unfaltering day by day.
And so shall we reach that harbor
 Where Our Father waits to say:

"Well done, thou good and faithful,
 Receive reward of me,
For 'tis only by toil unending,
 That ye shall my glory see."

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

A LESSON OF LIFE

As I sit by the changing ocean,
A lesson of life I learn;
To give up earth's hard struggle,
And to the great All-Father turn.

For as I meditate upon Life,
With its changes and its fears,
I feel in my heart of hearts,
That there is One who cares:

One who stretches His hands to His children,
Struggling in life's dark waves,
He chideth and correcteth,
Yet evermore He saves.

And the age-old voice of the ocean,
Repeats this thought to me;
"That what is, has been, and what has been
Evermore shall be."

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

So, as the waves to the sea beach,
And the breakers to the shore;
I drift to my haven of refuge,
With the Lord to be evermore.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

THE CAMPFIRES ON THE HILLS

As I watch in the star-lit evening,
The campfires on the hills;
To me come thoughts untellable,
And my soul with longing fills

To hie me too to the hillcrests,
Beyond canyon and chaparral;
Afar from the noisy cities,
Where the restless people dwell.

And there with her, her only,
The woman of my choice,
Would my restless soul find quietude,
'Neath the magic of her voice.

And thus it was in the bygones,
In a far primeval day:
Ere the money-god had clutched us,
And held us in its sway.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

So ever as I watch in the evening,
The campfires on the hills,
To me come thoughts untellable,
And my soul with longing fills.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

AFTER THE STORM

(Redlands, California, January, 1915)

The rainbow archeth the valley.
The "suspension" archeth the flood.
The streams bear down their torrents.
'Fore winds the storm clouds scud.

The earth hath been deluged with water,
But the storm hath expended his wrath;
The arch of promise appeareth,
And "clearing" comes from the North.

Yes, promise we see in the rainbow,
That symbol of God's caring love;
That while man on the earth remaineth,
The world shall be spared from flood.

So with spirits sobered and chastened,
By God's exhibition of power;
We return to our duties enstrengthened,
To endure until Heaven's grand hour.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

ASILOMAR

I'll sing you a song of love,
Asilomar, Asilomar!
"Rest-by-the-sea, you've been to me"
Asilomar.

I came a world-worn wanderer,
Asilomar, Asilomar!
A rest so sweet, a safe retreat,
Asilomar.

I've met the hand of fellowship,
Asilomar, Asilomar!
And faces sweet, and glances fleet,
Asilomar.

Not woman's love but love of thee,
Asilomar, Asilomar!
Has brought me joy without alloy,
Asilomar.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

THE CITY BY THE BAY

O San Francisco, San Francisco
Thou city by the Bay,
Whene'er I look upon thine hills
My thoughts drift far away

To where bold Drake came dashing
Across the Western main
Followed by the Franciscan Fathers
From the dear old land of Spain.

And there they built their Mission
In a pueblo by the Bay;
And because their hearts were weary
And their thoughts were far away

They called it Mission Dolores,
Because their thoughts were sad;
But as joy ever follows sadness
Right soon their hearts were glad.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Then came the Spanish courtiers
And señoritas passing fair
And set up Old World customs
On these hillsides bleak and bare;

And in the glad fiestas
In that pueblo by the Bay
The señoritas ever were trustful
And the Dons were ever gay.

So passed the brief glad years
In that city by the Bay
And I sing to you a time
That has all but passed away.

So as I grow to be agèd
In this city by the Bay
Whene'er I look upon thine hills
My thoughts drift far away.

To where bold Drake came dashing
Across the Western main,
Followed by the Franciscan Fathers
From the dear old land of Spain.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

WAR POEMS

THE RETREAT FROM MONS— AUGUST 1914

Lay to the South of Belgium's land,
 The British true and staunch.
A handful small, to aid the Gaul,
 Against the avalanche

Of Teuton might, not Teuton right,
 Who, flushed with greed and pride,
Had swept aside, tho' greatly tried,
 The armies of the country side,

Of little Belgium—now so great,
 In the eyes of all the world!
Against the British there entrenched,
 The Teuton legions hurled,

Their vaunted strength of horse and man
 Of bayonet and sword;
They met unflinching courage then,
 And thickly strewed the sward,

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Their dead and dying lay in heaps;
They failed to take the trench;
So sternly held—for well upheld
The men of General French.

The age-long grand supremacy
Of Britain's men in fight;
Again the Teuton men came on,
Again, again till night.

And then as burned the countryside—
Just fired to give them light—
The Teuton mortars hurled their shells—
A grand and awful sight—

But still the British held the trench
And fought the long night through;
Unrecking pain—unrecking gain,
As British men will do.

When morning dawned, the Teutons spawned
Again their countless hordes—
While the wounded in their agony,
Each praised or cursed their Gods.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Behind the trench stood General French,
 Of British bull-dog breed;
‘I would to God I could afford
 To fight and not recede.

But we’re out-numbered ten to one,
 The Frenchmen fear defeat,
No succor comes to aid my men,
 So we, too, must retreat.

But fight them, fight them, all the way,
 Nor allow a turning move
To outflank my brave British men
 Nor the Frenchmen whom we love.”

So slowly backward fell the line—
 Facefronted to the foe;
The Teutons pressed upon their flank,
 But further could not go.

For many days without delays,
 The rearward movement pressed.—
The injured staggering in their ranks—
 Their wounds were all undressed.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

And then at last, long fighting past
They made good their retreat,
And stood again to face their foes
With trophies at their feet.

The trophies of a world-wide praise—
So masterly their retreat;
For thus receding 'fore their foe
Is victory—not defeat!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

MONS RECAPTURED

Mons! The magic word, the tragic word,
 Of four long years ago
Is 'gain upon the people's tongue,
 Fresh wrested from the foe.

The British then in serried ranks,
 Out-numbered ten to one,
Gave way before the mighty hosts,
 But checked the brutal Hun.

It availèd not those Teuton hordes,
 In onslaugts strong and fierce,
To hurl their vaunted strength upon
 The lines they could not pierce.

And now again, the British stock,
 From far Canadian land,
Sweep back the foul invader's troops,
 Who cannot them withstand.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

So as the bell of liberty,
Rings out the knell of war,
The British claim their own again,
And Mons is free once more.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

THE FIRSTLINGS

(*America's Engineers at Cambrai*)

DEDICATED TO THEIR MOTHERS

They fought with their British brothers
And sternly stemmed the tide
Of the on-rushing, crushing Teutons,
And never "enough" they cried.

They fought 'neath the sun bare-headed,
They fought 'neath the noontide's glare;
And many were quite unarmed,
And even their hands were bare.

So they clenched their fists bare-handed,
And ever they cried aloud;
"We'll fight till the utmost reckoning
That Columbia may be proud.

May be proud of us—her 'firstlings'
Who gladly give our lives,
That the cause of Right may triumph—
That he who truly strives—

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

For Democracy's grand dominion,
That it may be world-wide;
Will say of us, the firstlings,
‘ ‘Twas but for this, they died! ”

L' ENVOI

The moon looks down in pity;
But the stars look down and smile,
On those whose final sacrifice,
Hath made their lives worth-while!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

“LAFAYETTE, WE ARE HERE”

“Lafayette, we are here!”
The words forthleapt,
As lightnings, jagged-edged,
From out the cloud quick cleft

Strike downward through the stillèd air
And all aghast they stood,
Electrically elated,
Finding those words were good—

Above all other words, they've said,
Tho' spake that day statesmen of note,
Marshals of France
And all the galaxy of Frenchmen gay.

No words so grippèd that vast throng,
High keyed, alert, expectant
As those of him who ready stood
To take his men triumphant

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Through hell of flaming trench
Columbia's gallant sons undaunted,
To save the sons of Albion
From scorn of Teuton vaunted.

L' ENVOI

And so he cried aloud:
“Lafayette, we are here!”
The greatest cry of freedom,
Heard now for many a year!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

LINES IN A NURSE'S ALBUM

I don't know what to say,
I am confusèd quite!
I really ought to have a thought,
But I don't know what to write.

Now 'twas a lady asked me,
In fact it was a nurse—
To refuse her were unmannerly,
And other things far worse

So this shall I say (and mean what I say!),
You've chosen a good, good work,
So stay with it untiring
And never think to shirk;

That upon the day you graduate,
You'll find that you have won
The love of those around you,
And they will say, "Well done!"

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

That "Well done" will encourage you,
In your work of duty grand,
And it will help and cheer you,
Till you reach the Better Land!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

O MATRON TALL

O matron tall, a queen among all,
Thy compeers near and far.
To me thou art a thing apart;
A winsome lovely star.

Queen among women,
Head among nurses,
Origin of blessings
And theme of these verses.

Take this my tribute small,
Hide it from sight.
For in it is my heart laid bare,
And I gone into the night!

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

“AND UNDERNEATH ARE THE
EVERLASTING ARMS”

I've lost in the world's great battle,
I've become as a jaded leaf;
Yet I give not way to sorrow,
Nor bow my head in grief.

No! I go on my way unfaltering,
Unbowed in spirit and mind;
For I look to a higher Providence
Whose ways are always kind.

Yea, tho' I have broken his every commandment,
Have trod the downward road,
At last I've accepted His pardon
And rested on Him my load.

For ever hath youth been wayward,
In manhood we wander afar;
But we all return to Our Father
When cometh the evening star.

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

L'Envoi
NIGHT THOUGHTS

The sweet balm of sleep
Has vanished,
Rest from my weary soul
Is banished;

And my mind goes wandering
From shore to shore
In search of adventures
It has met before.

A holy joy,
A forgotten sin,
A fortune first,
A salvaged pin!

While the angels smile
In Heaven above
As soul meets soul
In perfect love,

SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND AND OTHER POEMS

Thus thought on thought
And plan on plan
I roam world-wide
With my fellow man

'Til my soul, cries
"Weary, distraught, distrest,
Cease thou to think
And seek thou rest";

For my thoughts, night thoughts
Prove far too deep;
So I seek oblivion
In quiet sleep!

Date Due

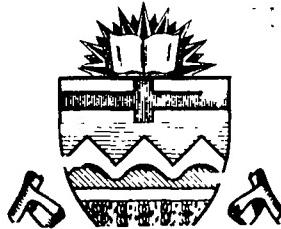
RUTH APR 6 2 '76
APR 2 RETURN

NO

500518

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

CHARLES SONGS OF THE NORTHLAND



500518

PS
3525
I313S6

Miller, F.C.
Songs of the
Northland.

RACED.

CAMERON LIBRARY

IER, B. C.

PS 3525 I313 S6 c.1

Miller, Frederick Charles

Songs of the Northland, and ot
HSS



0 0004 8283 535